

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/CE:VSGRAY
APPROVED BY EUR:JEGOODBY
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 177487

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)

SUBJECT:PRESIDENTIAL VISIT: ADDITIONAL Q AND A FOR BERLIN
TOWN MEETING

REF: (A) BERLIN 4352 NOTAL (B) BERLIN 4557 NOTAL

IN VIEW OF NATURE OF PRIMARY CHARGE AGAINST NICO HUEBNER
(DRAFT EVASION), POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT THE PRESIDENT MIGHT
RECEIVE A FOLLOW-UP QUESTION ON THE RECENT GDR DECISION TO
INTRODUCE PRE-MILITARY TRAINING INTO NINTH AND TENTH GRADE
CLASSES (REF A). EMBASSY BERLIN HAS SUGGESTED (REF B)
FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY Q AND A ON SUBJECT:

BEGIN TEXT

Q: DO YOU AGREE WITH EAST GERMAN CHURCH LEADERS WHO HAVE
CONDEMNED THE RECENT GDR DECISION TO INTRODUCE PRE-MILITARY
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TRAINING INTO NINTH AND TENTH GRADE CLASSES THIS FALL?

A: I AM AWARE OF PRESS REPORTS THAT THE GDR INTENDS TO
INTRODUCE SUCH OBLIGATORY TRAINING AND I AM ALSO AWARE THAT
CHURCH LEADERS IN THE GDR HAVE EXPRESSED THEMSELVES ABOUT
THIS MATTER. I BELIEVE SUCH TRAINING IS NOT CONDUCTIVE TO
IMPROVEMENT OF THE ATMOSPHERE IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND IS IN-

CONSISTENT WITH THE PEACEFUL SPIRIT OF HELSINKI.

FYI: PRE-MILITARY TRAINING WAS FORMERLY CONDUCTED ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS THROUGH YOUTH AND SPORTS GROUPS. THE NEW DECISION WILL FORCE FAMILIES OPPOSED TO SUCH TRAINING TO DECLARE THEMSELVES, THUS EFFECTIVELY BARRING THE YOUNGSTERS INVOLVED FROM HIGHER EDUCATION. IN A PRIVATE MEETING JUNE 20 LUTHERAN BISHOP SCHOENHERR ATTEMPTED UNSUCCESSFULLY TO GET PREMIER STOPH TO RECONSIDER THE POLICY. THIS WAS FOLLOWED JUNE 25 BY A PASTORAL LETTER LABELING THE POLICY A "DEMONSTRATIVE ACT THAT WILL UNDERCUT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE PEACE POLICY OF THE GDR" AND PROMISING CHURCH SUPPORT TO THOSE WHO, FOLLOWING THEIR CONSCIENCE, REFUSE SUCH TRAINING. THE REGIME, WHICH HAS BEEN ACTIVELY WOOING THE CHURCH IN RECENT MONTHS, HAS NOT YET REACTED TO THE LETTER. AT STAKE IS THE FRAGILE CHURCH-STATE ACCOMMODATION AT HAS BEEN GROWING SINCE THE MARCH 3 MEETING BETWEEN THE GDR'S PROTESTANT LEADERSHIP AND PARTY BOSS HONECKER. (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. DEPARTMENT CONCURS. CHRISTOPHER

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